

police sometimes used violence to prevent groups from engaging in peaceful protest.

It will be very interesting to see how the police and the government treat these demonstrations that will take place across Russia on March 20. These conditions would be intolerable in any country, and this conduct would be unacceptable for any government. Clearly, Russia today is not the Soviet Union, neither in its treatment of Russia's people nor in its foreign policy. But I fear that may be damning with faint praise, and Russians themselves are right to hold their country and their government up to higher standards.

Russia is a great nation, and like all Americans of good will, I want Russia to be strong and successful. I want Russia's economy to be a vibrant source of wealth and opportunity for all Russians. I want Russia to play a proud and responsible role in world affairs. I will continue to affirm in public and in private that the best way for Russians to secure what they say they care about most—reduced corruption, a strengthened and equitable rule of law, economic modernization—is by nurturing a pluralistic and free civil society, by building independent and sustainable institutions of democracy, and by respecting the human rights of all.

I was happy to see that Russian political parties not aligned with the Kremlin actually won more seats in regional parliamentary elections this week. Perhaps this signals a growing recognition among Russians that the authoritarian tendencies of the Kremlin need to be rolled back through popular opposition. Perhaps the Russian Government could allow future elections at all levels to be freer and fairer. Perhaps. But there is still a long way to go for the cause of democracy in Russia, and I hope these small electoral gains only embolden democracy's defenders.

As we speak up for the rights of Russia's dissidents, we must do the same for the rights of Russia's neighbors as well—neighbors such as the country of Georgia. I visited Georgia in January, and I had a chance to travel to the so-called "administrative boundary line" with the breakaway region of Abkhazia. On the other side of that boundary line is sovereign Georgian territory occupied by Russian troops, as it has been since the 2008 invasion. When I was in Munich last month for an annual security conference, I heard several Russian officials speaking from the same script, alleging acts of aggression by Georgian forces against Russian peacekeepers—the same kind of rhetoric we heard before the 2008 invasion. This should give us all pause. I know Washington has a lot of foreign policy challenges at the moment, but we cannot forget Georgia and the support it deserves amid a continuing threat from its neighbor to the north.

A Russian government that better protects the human dignity of its people would be more inclined to deal with its neighbors in peace and mutual re-

spect. That is why we should all say a silent prayer and a public word of support for Russia's courageous human rights activists, as they make their voices heard this Saturday. These brave men and women want the best for their country. They want a government that is not only strong but just, peaceful, inclusive, and democratic. I urge Russia's leaders to recognize that peaceful champions of universal values are not a threat to Russia, and that groups such as this should not face the kinds of violence, repression, and intimidation that Russian authorities have used against similar demonstrators in the past. The eyes of the world will be watching.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3467, AS MODIFIED

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the adoption of amendment No. 3467, that it be modified with the changes at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3467), as modified, is as follows:

On page 130, after line 24, insert the following:

SEC. 434. AUTHORIZATION OF USE OF CERTAIN LANDS IN THE LAS VEGAS MCCARRAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ENVIRONS OVERLAY DISTRICT FOR TRANSIENT LODGING AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law and except as provided in subsection (b), Clark County, Nevada, is authorized to permit transient lodging, including hotels, and associated facilities, including enclosed auditoriums, concert halls, sports arenas, and places of public assembly, on lands in the Las Vegas McCarran International Airport Environs Overlay District that fall below the forecasted 2017 65 dB day-night annual average noise level (DNL), as identified in the Noise Exposure Map Notice published by the Federal Aviation Administration in the Federal Register on July 24, 2007 (72 Fed. Reg. 40357), and adopted into the Clark County Development Code in June 2008.

(b) LIMITATION.—No structure may be permitted under subsection (a) that would constitute a hazard to air navigation, result in an increase to minimum flight altitudes, or otherwise pose a significant adverse impact on airport or aircraft operations.

SIGNING AUTHORIZATION

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader be authorized to sign any duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions today, Wednesday, March 17, and Thursday, March 18.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 2 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:27 p.m., recessed until 2 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Acting President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INOUE). A quorum is present.

The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Thank you, Mr. President.

EXHIBITION OF ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT AGAINST G. THOMAS PORTEOUS, JR., JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Secretary inform the House of Representatives that the Senate is ready to receive the managers appointed by the House for the purpose of exhibiting Articles of Impeachment against G. Thomas Porteous, Jr., Judge of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, agreeably to the notice communicated to the Senate, and at the hour of 2 p.m., today, Wednesday, March 17, 2010, the Senate will receive the honorable managers on the part of the House of Representatives in order that they may present and exhibit the said Articles of Impeachment against the said G. Thomas Porteous, Jr., Judge of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following counsel and staff of the House of Representatives be permitted the privileges of the floor during the proceedings with respect to the trial of the impeachment of Judge Porteous. They are as follows: Danielle Brown, Allison Halataei, Alan Baron, Harry Damelin, Mark Dubester, Kirsten Konar, Jessica Klein, Branden Ritchie, Michael Len, Phil Tahtakran, Ryan Clough, and Elisabeth Stein.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senate will be in order.

I will now call upon the Secretary for the majority.

The Secretary to the majority, Lula J. Davis, announced the presence of the House managers, as follows:

Mr. President, I announce the presence of the managers on the part of the House of Representatives to conduct proceedings on behalf of the House concerning the impeachment of G. Thomas